

NANCY HANKS BIRTHPLACE
— THE CAROLINAS

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MOTHER, NANCY HANKS

Hanks Family

Nancy Hanks Birthplace Claims Carolinas

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Nancy Hanks---Her Home In North Caro

By Minnie Stowe Puett and Adelaide Smith Beard

"He is truly great who rises to greatness from profound obscurity."

There is no more wonderful truth in history than this statement, as the lives of many of the world's greatest men have borne witness. As Romulus and Remus came from the lair of the wolf to become the founders of imperial Rome; as the great Napoleon arose from his humble Corsican cottage to be the ruler of Europe; so Abraham Lincoln lifted himself from a pioneer cabin to a place of supreme greatness, that is magnified as the years roll by.

His origin and rise to immortality embodies in itself, as has the life of no other person, the true spirit of American democracy. This principle has been ignored by the majority of historians, who have seemingly deemed it necessary to manufacture from their own imaginations an origin worthy of his greatness. This falacy is all too unnecessary, for the position that Lincoln now occupies in the hall of fame is secure beyond their ability to add to or to detract therefrom.

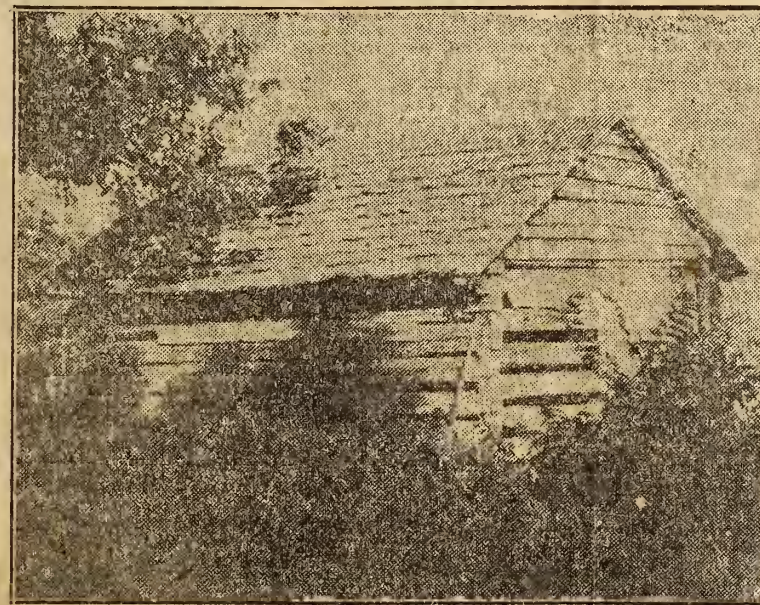
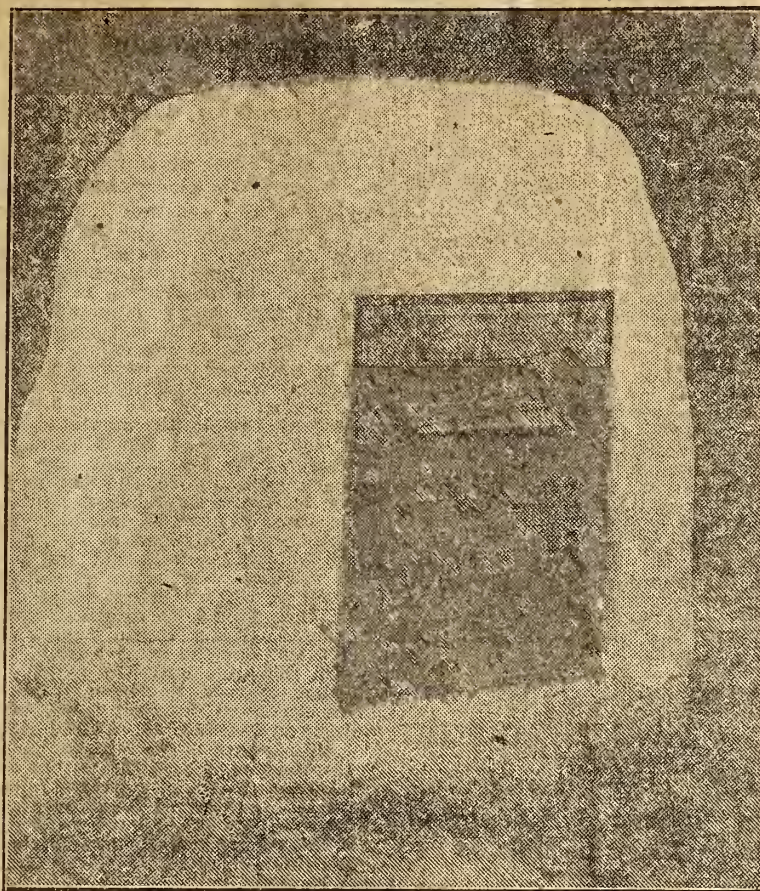
Little has ever been written concerning Nancy Hanks, Lincoln's mother, and the fact that she spent most of her early life in North Carolina has been unknown or ignored by his biographers. In an effort to preserve this truth to history, there has recently been erected near the town of Belmont, Gaston county, North Carolina, a monument on the site where stood her cabin home, near the banks of the Catawba.

The silver current of this river wends its way slowly through the verdant hills. From its mountain sources of ice cold springs, winning tribute from a thousand rills, it reigns a queenly river, matchless in its beauty and wonderful in its power. Along its flower enameled borders the dark brown Indians roamed in years gone by. Sapona, the great chief of the Catawbans, lighted his council fires on its banks. The Indians have gone forever, but their fame is kept immortal by the river which bears their name.

The beauty and fertility of the Catawba valley attracted many of the early settlers to this region, and their primitive homes were built on the hills overlooking the stream. In one of these little cabins lived a maiden whose name and life were destined to become of vital importance and enduring fame throughout the nation. She is described as having dark hair, sallow complexion, and gray eyes, and of sad and thoughtful countenance. Little else is known of her personality, but all the world knows her as Nancy Hanks, the mother of Abraham Lincoln.

According to local tradition Nancy Hanks was an orphan and came to North Carolina with her uncle, Dicky Hanks, when he moved here from Virginia. The first member of the Hanks family about whom anything is known was Benjamin Hanks, who came to Massachusetts from England, in 1699. One of his sons, William Hanks, moved to Virginia. He had a family of 12 children, his descendants forming a large settlement in Amelia county. Some of this family migrated to Kentucky, while other came to North Carolina.

Three members of the Hanks fam-



ily, two uncles and an aunt of Nancy Hanks, settled in Lincoln, now Gaston county, North Carolina, near the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were accompanied from Virginia by the orphan Nancy, who spent most of her girlhood here, with one of these uncles, Dicky Hanks. He was the ancestor of many of the present residents of

Gaston and Lincoln counties. He moved away from his home on the Catawba and lived in another part of the county, where he was afterwards burned to death. Much stress is laid by some historians on the will of one, Joseph Hanks, of Virginia and Kentucky, claiming that the Lucy Hanks named in his will,

was the mother of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. This could not have been true, since it is positively known that Dicky Hanks was Nancy's uncle and there is no Dicky or Richard Hanks mentioned in Joseph's will.

Nancy left her uncle's home while he still resided on the Catawba, and went to live in the western part of what was then Lincoln, now Rutherford county, North Carolina, near where the town of Rutherfordton stands today. Here she lived in the home of Abraham Enloe, going there for the purpose of assisting Mrs. Enloe with her household duties. She later went with his family to what is now Swain county, North Carolina.

Abraham Enloe is described as being of fine physique, tall, angular, with dark skin and coarse black hair. He was a leader in his community, being a man of naturally keen intellect and having an education much superior to his associates.

His father was a school teacher and came to this country from Scotland, and personally educated his son. While Nancy was an inmate of the Enloe home, circumstances arose which caused Mrs. Enloe to insist that she be sent away, she was taken to Kentucky by relative of the family, whose home was in that state. These facts have been always known in the communities where she lived in Gaston, Rutherford and Swain counties, and many of the present members of the Enloe family acknowledge their truth.

The boulder pictured in this article was recently erected by the descendants of a former owner of the land on which it stands. He personally remembered the cabin and often pointed out this site as the home of Nancy and Dicky Hanks. That Nancy lived here and her subsequent life in North Carolina were both well known and undisputed in this community. On the fact of this boulder, which is of massive granite, is a bronze tablet bearing a replica of a frontier cabin and the following inscription: "This stone marks the site of the log cabin home of Dicky Hanks, an uncle of Nancy Hanks, mother of Abraham Lincoln. Nancy spent much of her girlhood here with her uncle." The foundation stones on which the boulder was placed were once part of the chimney of the original cabin. The logs of this cabin, rough hewn from virgin timber, have endured until today, and according to family tradition were rebuilt into another cabin still in use on this plantation.

At the foot of the hill on which was set this simple home, in the primeval forest, is a bubbling spring. A lone beach tree today stands guard over it. Can we not imagine the young Nancy wending her way down the hill to this quiet spot, where she quenched her thirst with the sparkling waters and searched its hidden depths for her mirrored reflection.

On viewing the magnificent monument which the nation recently erected on the potomac at Washington, to suitably commemorate the great Lincoln, let one thought be given the woman who shaped his young life, to Nancy Hanks, his mother.

Rutherford County, North Carolina

Nancy Hanks was reared in Rutherford County, North Carolina.

Coggins: Abraham Lincoln, A North Carolinian; p. 2.

(Signed the Vendor)
by a multiple life policy of insurance, No. E-96, issued to the Vendor and made effective on October 1, 1934.

Name of Insured Person		Name of Customer
Effective Date	Amount of Insurance	Certificate Number

Subject to the terms and conditions of said Policy, the life of the person named in the foregoing schedule is insured thereunder against death for the amount indicated in said schedule for a period of six months, commencing on the effective date indicated in such schedule and terminating without grace or notice at the end of such period.

Said insurance is payable to the Vendor for the benefit of the Customer named in the foregoing schedule, the amount payable to be applied by the Vendor on its account with the Customer. If the amount paid exceeds said Customer's indebtedness to the Vendor, the excess is payable by the Vendor to the said Customer, if a corporation or partnership, otherwise to the Customer's estate.

The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company

Examined by _____

FORM 2410-10-34-5000

E. C. Wightman
Secretary

A list of Col. Robert Orr's descendants who settled in Pendleton District South Carolina as early as 1769 reveals that Robert's grand daughter Elizabeth Orr married Thomas Hanks from Virginia. Hence the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Hanks "married a man named Thomas Lincoln or Linkhorn and migrated to the west and died young." The family tradition states she was the mother of the President.

See Orr Paper Hatcher White

CURRENT TRADITIONS ABOUT PARENTS OF NANCY HANKS

1. Nancy, Lincoln's mother, was the child of Lucy Hanks, Hornback or Sparrow,..... Boyd.
2. They(Thomas and Betsy Sparrow) were the only parents she ever knew several who saw them die beleive today that they were hys father and mother. Lamon.
3. Lucy (Hanks) became the wife of Henry Sparrow and the mother of eight children. Nancy the younger was early sent to live with her Aunt and Uncle, Betsy and Thomas Sparrow. Lamon.
4. Nancy Hanks' mother was a Barry. She married a Hanks who was the father of Nancy. He died in Virginia and his widow married a Sparrow, and Richard Barry raised Nancy. Whitney.
5. I do not know when Luke Hank's wife, Ann, came into Anderson County, North Carolina. In 1834 Ann Hanks estate was settled, and the disclosure shows twelve children and one Nancy missing. Knotts.
6. Joseph and Nancy Shipley Hanks had eight children Thomas, Joshua, William, Charles, Joseph, Elizabeth, Polly and Nancy. This child Nancy the youngest child was born Feb. 5, 1874 and named for her mother. Hitoncock.

Notes - Numbers 2 and 3 may be eliminated by documentary evidence
Numbers 1, 3, and 4 may be in agreement about the mothers name
Two names Lucy and Nancy seem to have the best claim for the maternity of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.
Lucy is said to be the mother of Nancy Hanks by a Virginia planter (out of wedlock)
Nancy, wife of Joseph, if she be the mother of the younger Nancy would make the mother of Lincoln legitimate.
Those who claim Lucy is the mother also make her a daughter of Nancy and Joseph but for some reason was left out in the will, as indicated by list above.

